

THISBE'S LAMENT AND OTHER POEMS

• HELMBOLD •

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THISBE'S LAMENT

AND

OTHER POEMS.

BY

MASSON PELL HELMBOLD,

AUTHOR OF

"CASSIA, A LETTER-TALE," "BERTRUCCIO," ETC.

Thus bards will live, thus bards will write,
So long as bards may see the light ;
And when the world they cease to write in,
Ye'll see no light where they saw light in.

PHILADELPHIA.
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1885.



PS 1919

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TO

MY MOTHER,

A MOTHER WHO, FOR ALL THE QUALITIES WHICH THAT PARENT
SHOULD POSSESS, HAS NEVER BEEN SURPASSED,

THIS VOLUME

IS

AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

P R E F A C E.

POETS, in these days, generally take refuge under the false and ridiculous supposition that it is impossible to write originally. It could be claimed equally well that the Pagans and Heathens now rampant in various parts of the world, should not be converted because no missionary can be an original missionary. As long as there are human beings, with minds that think and hearts that feel, there are ideas to feed and elevate those minds,—feelings and passions to move and refine those hearts. They are not the instructors of themselves individually; one original sympathetic mind sways them all. Yet here we find a man of

ordinary intellect ruling millions of his fellow-men. He has risen to his present state through his own abilities, and Fate, or even Good Luck, has had nothing to do with him. His own abilities made him what he is, and yet he need not deserve it. On the other hand, here is a philosopher, a poet, a man who was simply born to aid his fellow-men,—where or what is he? He is poor, unfortunate, sad, and persecuted. Now, which of these two men really deserves the philosopher's stone? One has it in reality; the other seems to have it, or uses it as though he had. One is Thomas Carlyle,—a man of vast power and learning; the other is Thomas Paine,—a man equally able and learned,—yet an Unbeliever! Now, whom are we to follow? One (very wisely) will answer, *Carlyle*; another (equally wisely,—he can prove it) says, *Paine*. So these two men can be both great and yet have ideas completely contradictory. Now, as long as there is a single idea in the myriad codes of philosophy

scattered throughout the Globe;—as long as there is one man to say this and another to say that;—as long as there are others to prove that he is right or wrong,—there is room for more Poets.

“ The meanest bard that ever scribbled can,
Thinking all his life, scribble well.”

There is, in other words, time to prove, and minds to assist in proving, the truest and best of those codes of philosophy; and a poet, devoting his whole mind, soul, and life to the study of such matters, is the one at least to try to regulate things for the welfare of his fellow-men.

The Author can confidently state that these Poems are original; he had an object in writing most of them, and has endeavored to reap from his own sufferings and longings a few morals which, expressed with as much sincerity and sympathy as his powers or feelings are capable of, he hopes will only go to the mark as well as his intention came to him.

The figures or dates affixed to some of the Pieces, indicate the ages at which they were composed. A particular apology is made for the "Seraph's Boon," as it was composed in the Author's fifteenth year, and is inserted for the mere sake of preservation.

The "Ode to a Nightingale," was written some two years before the Author had read Keats's address to the same bird; but he hopes it is too evidently original to necessitate this remark.

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THISBE'S LAMENT.

SOLITUDE! solitude that weep'st at thine own
Sad loneliness! Trees that droop beneath
The weight of some mysterious cause, and prone
Like a mournful maiden, over the heath
Shed tears more dread than fall from sorrow lone!
Seeking, myriad-wailing flood!—with breath
More filled with woe than lover's moan for love,
That yearn'st for some secret thing 'neath ale or
grove!—

Solitude! take thou too my wail of woe!
Till thy deep heart beats like a mother's for
Her weeping babe! Take me, bury me low
In thy bosom, and let the *Æolian* wind o'er

My rest sing a mother's lullaby! Oh!
Valleys! Mountains! Deep Cimmerian shore!
Hide me! Entomb me from the light of day!
Or show me where Pyramus's eyes last shed their
ray.

Ah, bird, thou sing'st nothing sweet,—sad emblem
Of departed youthful joys! even here,
Within this lane, didst sing Love's first anthem,
When this heart was erst Pyramus's: cold seer!
Thou wert but chanting Love's requiem:
Ev'n here, with heaps of flowers to cast as I came
near,
Pyramus hid, panting with heart-choked breath:
Alas! I dreamed not that he was so near to death!

Oh, cease, ye voices of Pierian springs,
Whose tales are lost to love and happiness!
Oh, cease to whisper of those wanderings
In Aonian vales of light and idleness!

Those winds, those wolds, and meres, those birds'
bright wings,
Which lips that thought of love forgot to bless!
Pyramus, thy lips! Oh, Jove, at their words
My soul leapt like the wind on harmonious chords!

Lost Pyramus, in this arbor didst bend
To kiss love's first bashfulness. Ah! and how
Came I here that morn and 'neath thee did wend,
All-assuming that I knew not that low,
Like a flower, thy rosy lips did tend
From thy dewy covert, when of my brow
Didst steal the boon, soft as the stealthy breeze
That drops its balm on the blushing Cyclades.

Sweet winds light-laden with Lydian calm,
Which Pyramus's lips did delight with mine,—
To the rapture of whose Sabean balm
Two souls rushed on the gale and there did join;

Warm as the waters by Livadia's palm
Down-leaping cliffs to mingle with the brine,—
Oh, wind! thou bear'st back to me my soul, lone,
And cold as the wave blighted by the cyclone!

Pyramus! (sweetest name of Polymnia born,—
Sweetest ev'r angel lips gave forth, like moist
The silvery vaults of Elysian morn
Bestirring in its fall,—first sadly voiced
By me in tones of joyless love forlorn,
And weird,—remembered name forever poised,
In the shape of his own sweet face, above
My sight—soul—my life—my misery and love!)

Pyramus! Thou that round my soul did spread
All shapes of beauty blooming here below ;—
That wert the sweet reaper of all I said,
And every thought I had ; oh, let me know
What distant field upholds thy lowly head,
Where thy cheek, tinged with a last dying glow,

Lost on the gale the life which was my love.
Speak ! Awake ! Spirit, oh, hast thou lips above ?

Ah, gay flowers that mock me with your bloom,
Which once I might have gladly plucked for bays,
In my own lost Pyramus's locks to loom,—
Fade !—Low as his lips which no more shall raise !
Sere as this heart that seeks a silent tomb !
Dead as the joy that waft ye love and praise !
Come, Night ; come, Death ; fair skies, roll away,
And leave darkness o'er my euthanasia.

TO THE RIVER HUDSON.

Most beautiful nymph of my native shore,
With thy gently heaving bosom bare,
Whose voice is like a lute within the air,
When sweet lips sing the music of their lore,—

Oh! beautiful nymph upon whom the more
I gaze do seem of all I've seen most fair,—
Into whose soul meseems I peer whene'er
Thine image I bend with open heart before,—
Hear me,—how is it that I sigh, and stay
Beside thee ere I part so lingeringly?
As into the eyes of love which fades away,
Stand and ponder,—as on vows made faithlessly?
Ah, virgin sweet, I would only thou couldst say
That I might live, to love thee everlastingily.

1881.

TO A NIGHTINGALE.

I.

HAVE we wearied of thy numerous strain?
Canst thou sing, forever at thine ease,
And the poet heed not, his attentions cease,
Choosing some other being of tree or sky or
plain,—

Some sweeter moral, higher theme than he may
gain

Of thee? Can he hear thy harmonies,—
Harped like the myriad-cadenced breeze,

Where flowers have a voice, the floods, and birds,—
and still shun thee with no pain?

II.

Where turn to find the glory of the vale,—
The worthiest thing that wins a steadfast love,—
The sweetest object that beautifies the grove,
And in its sweetness gives every star or beechen
pale

A deeper summer joy?—List to the nightingale,—
Turn thy feet into the night,—when, stoop'd
above,

The moon hearkens, a pallid rapture wove
In every beam,—when gaping darkness stands awed
over the midnight dale.

III.

Then give thy soul to the spirit of ecstasy !
Overflow thy bosom with the tides of joy !
Till they leap to burst their bounds, dissolve,
and die

In a torrent of happiness,—moving with the melody,—

Roaring, falling with the madness and cadency !

What is the soul's delight ! How seeks the eye
To behold the author of such a music high,
So falling from the heavens that it might a seraph
angel's be !

IV.

O primal moral of all morals here !
O bird that sings't all alone in arboreal shade,
Fast hidden from human eyes (or pent in glade,
Or in ethereal canopies) in the clear

Day,—didst thou not, full mournful of his sad career,
Join Adam, of lost Paradise dismayed,
In Serendib's isle sequestered as he strayed?
And still dost thou mourn his fall, hidden hermit of
the midnight drear?

v.

O sweet companion of our mother Eve!
Once full-fed with Eden's bowery breeze,
'Mid ceaseless balm of od'rous Summer trees,
What time the angels sought thy voice,—but not
to grieve,—
Raining like heaven's murmur'rous showers from
ev'ry eave!
O wild bewailer in a Lydian ease!
Or what hissing serpent, envious of thy keys,
Dared tempt thee with promised joy of fruit and life
Heaven refused to give?

VI.

Where is the tempting fruit, thy life and joys?—
The light of fadeless days and unknown years,—
Sweet paradisal rivers where the saddest tears
Of virgin flowers wept,—spotless leaves, opening
skies,
Where moon never looked down with pitiless
eyes,—
Where stars never rolled their myriad spheres,
Numerous as man's frailties, hopes, and fears?—
Where are they All? Oh, mortal bird! canst thou
e'er regain thy Paradise?

VII.

Spirit of sadness, and of hidden shame,
Heaven-doomed here in Stygian depths to
mourn,
Fearful of daylight, or human eyes and scorn,—
More drear than covert Eve, who clothed her naked
frame

Beneath the burning sight of Heaven's scornful
flame!

Oh, ever wilt thou sing? and still forlorn
Tell us we are of fallen parents born,—
Thro' Eden lost decreed our lives, our hopes, our
worship of God's name?

VIII.

Oh, then sing on, and human lips shall praise
Fore'er the sweetness of the immortal theme:
Even thou, that hast here but a fitful dream,
May'st find all sadness vain, and joy within thy
days:
And we, who seek for peace the haunts which are
thy ways,
Shall laugh to see how false this world may
seem,
How dark, sequestered thoughts the mind may
teem,
When heavenlier things are sought where heaven
itself surrounds the gaze.

TO A GYPSY GIRL.

HERE thou leap'st upon my sight
Like an angel of the height,
With thy loose and meteor hair,
And thy features wild and bare,
And thy foot so soft that springs
Man might think that thou hadst wings,
Until familiar with thy face
Thro' delineation of its grace,—
Until he saw that he might be
An earthly worshipper of thee.

But thou of love hast none,
Maiden of the forest lone !
Save that which in thy tribe
Barters thee, or wins thee with a bribe,
To bear thee thro' a distant shade
Where cute-eyed sin sits undismayed.

Oh, who could hesitate
To raise thy young life to a state
Worthy of its innocence,
And woman's natural moral sense?

Oh, here the forest is wild
Around thee, unstoried child!
Here alone within a dell
Full happily couldst thou dwell,
Nature's rude original!
And the dashing waterfall
Could tell thee naught beyond
The circle of its little pond,—
Could murmur to thy vision
Nothing of a life Elysian.

But, bound upon the spot,
Wouldst ask no change of lot,
To give thee a new home
And thoughts; no favorite thing
But only lips that sing—

Till, lain upon the sod,
Thy soul aspired to God—
Should to thy bosom come;
And yet thy meek and humble sense
Would be a bright intelligence,
Unconstrained by human folly,
And imagined melancholy,
And all this life's dull sophistries,
Which are the wisdom of the wise,
And but a veil on sightless eyes.

Oh, who would not that he could bind
To such a solitude his mind?—
Shun his noble veins or race
To have thy blood within their place,—
Don thy wild robes for his gold
And fantastic garments' fold,—
Pluck the leaves from off thy head,
And place them on his own instead,—
Take thy meek, unknowing mind,
And cast his learning to the wind,—

Take thy dell, thy waterfall,
Be Nature's rude original,
And die as if he felt on earth
The sweet advantage of a birth!

1882.

T O A P E B B L E.

I.

THOU simplest thing that God hath made,
Maiden-bosomed being, so white
That of some snowy Alpine glade
Dost seem a flake, wind-wafted light,—
Sweet virgin-lippèd, modest mite,
What dost thou here? Who loves thee in thy cavern
shade,
So meek scarce prompt'st the heart to ask why there
thou'rt laid?

II.

But thy spirit is not on earth,
Pale gem more dear than ruby red;
For seraphs know thou hast a worth,—
That one mother bore, equal fed,
And breast-cradled thy infant head;
Tho' men revere not the lineage of thy birth,
Nor bind the sapphire's gold around thy humble
girth.

III.

Thou, all alone and unbeloved,—
Even as a maid whose simple face
With no beauty human heart hath moved,—
Shall remain uncherished in thy grace,
And shapes more vain take thy due place:
So souls more fit for thrones in heaven above
Are lost on earth to worth, happiness, and love.

TO AN INDIAN SKULL.

(Found near a forest.)

I.

HOLLOW face of more than mortal scorn,
With deathly lips that mock the orient skies,
He who wends thee by with life-unthoughtful
eyes,
Treads thee in his path, and the cloudless morn
Of life is dimmed with thoughts of erst unborn :
Black visions, omens, and breathless mysteries
Haunt thy sealed lips, and spiritually rise
From those sightless spheres whose orbs are maggot-
worn.

II.

I curse thee, oracle of dread decrees !
I cast thee from my path ! Away ! thou'lta haunt

Me in after-years with fears and mockeries !

Go down to thy deep-delved caverns, and freeze
In the bowels of thy mother-womb ; there daunt
The lithe and soulless worm, or rant thy vaunt,
Like an abortion, to th' heartless earth at ease,
Unseen by the world, unheard in thy taunt.

III.

Heaven forgive the blasphemy of that lie !

Sacred thing ! Foreboder of man's liberty
And shiven soul ! Thou'rt dear to this slavery
Of sin-fettered hearts unwarned to die !
Sweet pastoral of moral strain and joy !
Here let the forest sing with empty threnody,
But thou, with all the holy love in melody,
Shall speak of things beyond where birds may fly.

IV.

Here, by the side of mighty trees, thou'l stay
The mightiest of all God's wonders great ;

For here the friendless shepherd shall cease his lay,
And pause the noontide hours to ponder late,
And leave his prosperous flocks to dream on fate :
Thus thou, sweet pastoral, shall teach him to pray
Prayers that never toned the rustic way ;
Then trees and floods shall make him praise his
state.

v.

And here the traveller, wayward bent from home,
Shall feel the thrills for ones afar away,
By sunny Loire meandering on its way,
Or by Hudson's murmurous breast of foam :
But thou, with lips pent up to heaven's dome,
Soul thyself of one departed, shall say,
“ Fear not, for God will keep them in thy stay ; ”
And, all-assured, once more his path he'll roam.

VI.

Here the daily heavens will stretch revealed,
Moons gaze thro' the canopies of the spheres,

Suns on suns know thee, storms on storms be pealed
With torrents amain thine unyielding years :
For the rains will dash, and moons roll in vain :
when clears
The tempest, suns will bleach thee ; Time must yield ;
And, her only living thing, dust of the field,
Thou'l be a sibyl of man's moral fears.

VII.

Then, nature's greatest boon, Oh, here remain,
And be a spirit and a teacher sent to men ;
For thou, in mortal life, wert of this domain,
And didst know this world, this mount, stream, and
glen,
These passions with their hopes and changes, men
With their communions of joy to sin, of truth to
pain ;
And the spirit which haunts thee hath no stain,
And thy lips are ones where God's own have been.

TO A FARMER'S CHILD.

I.

LEAPING, twirling, dancing thing,
Like a bird on merry wing,—
Joyous in the morning's rise,
Like a lark within the skies,—
Joyous when the even falls,
Fresh as birds in western squalls,—
Oh, when will thy sadness come,
And leave thy soul within a home?—
When will happiness leave thy breast
Like a bird without a nest?

II.

God's eyes are still above thee,—
Can He ever cease to love thee?—

Leave thee in simplicity
To brutal man's duplicity ?
No ! He hath made thy nature mild,
And innocence is God's own child,
And He will guard thee and defend thee,
If coming evils dare offend thee ;
He will bless, and see thee blest
With love of Him within thy breast.

III.

Emblem of my infant years,
Author of these childish tears,
Rosy lips where meadows blush
With all their flowery flush ;
Leaping, palpitating breast,
Like the streamlet's glad unrest,
Oh, let me press thee to the bosom
Where joy so long hath ceased to blossom !
Sweet harbinger from out my Past !
Oh, lend my heart thy flood at last.

IV.

Such thoughts as these cannot be thine,
Or thy spirit would weep with mine :
Such thoughts as these should fill the soul
Where tides of sorrow as billows roll,
And whelm the spirit in a sea
Of darkness never known to thee :
For thou, in unsuspecting state
All reckless of a future fate,
Art an image of thy God
Too pure to fear the pressing of a sod.

1880.

NIGHT.

I.

OH, think not that night lacks of being fair,
Nor that the sun is mistress of the sky,
For the virgin moon sleeps most fair on high,
And all the heavens with mantles repair
To hide her from the peeping sun, whilst in the air
Sweet roundelay waft sweetest lullaby ;
Sweet even as an Indian mother's sigh,
What time she seeks some dark and grassy lair
To rock her sleeping babe. There's such a tone,
Such an angel voice of cadence in the wood,
Which the raptured spirit seems to hear alone,
When night falls on heavenly solitude,
That all the golden stars which ever shone,
Are less than the pure thoughts it makes us brood.

II.

Beauteous night! beauteous moon! what lowly thing
Must not adore? Lo, oft upon the white
Carpathian fastnesses, to praise thy light,
The lautari lonely takes his wondering,—
Wild as a bird with only lips that sing!
And afar in Shihrian mountain-woods, bright
Eyes have caught their rapture, whilst in the height
Pale lips tell of love too sweet for murmuring.
Most beautiful night! descend upon my soul,
And blend with my life thy blest tranquillity!
Till, as my prayer ascends to his goal,
Stoops the laboring moon, and hears me with a
sigh;
Even while the strange and vapory mist roll
O'er his face, and stars look down in mystery.

NIGHT.

NIGHT wooes the maiden moon,
She drops in pallid swoon
Upon his breast; all things soon
Begin to love, and faint with joy:
Sleeps not a bird in the dell;
Black owl and black pipistrel
In their own ways do tell
Their dreams unto the midnight sky.

There are lips that grow pale,—
Pale even with the tale
Too mad for lovers to wail,—
But they speak love with silent tones
Easier than with shrill cries;
For now do eyes meet eyes
Where heart to heart replies,
With love's deep, distinct monotones.

WRITTEN AT MIDNIGHT.

THERE are voices in the silence of night,—

The stars are still, save that in their zones they fly

Onward, but yet they have whisperings on high,

As tho' the birds did echo in their light,

Which having heard, meseems stars are more bright,

And the moon far more cold, and seem to sigh

The vibration of earth's sweet melody :

And one heart beats louder, and the keen flight

Of one soul wings new spheres of mysteries.

Yon domes, where men meet for praise or prayer,

Still repeat, tho' midnight on their altars sleep ;

And, ah ! this mind, erst wrapt in speechless care,

Now holds with One its open converse deep,

And men may scorn or heed these tearful eyes !

TO SAINT MARY'S LAKE, WHITE
PLAINS.

I.

FAR from thee, by Potomac's tide, I stood,
And saw his waters without one beauty
That is thine ; the wild raven's dinsome key
Rose from the marshes drear, whilst by thy flood
Heavenly lays chant glorious solitude :
And, hearing, all my soul went back to thee,—
Even as a bird with heart of brimming glee
Seeks for merrier pastime a gayer wood.
Thou art to memory a thing so bright,
That still I see the golden passage of
The sun, with thy light clouds faring o'er, in light
Spread on thy surface ; and the willowy grove
On thy shore, murmur'rous ever, bending down white
Eaves, like pale lips which yearn to whisper love.

II.

It is not here alone whereby I find
To think of thee, for in other climes, where
The grape feeds luxury to every air,
And streams on streams are lulled with rosy wind,
Thou still hast been a picture in my mind,
Whereof the more I trace, the more must stare,
Till each lineament is expressed more fair,
And the very lips of music are defined
In the breathing sky, and the flood, and dale.
And I have stood on Thames's long-harped shore,
To hear of her unmoved full many a tale ;
And I have seen the sunny Loire, untouched, bore
'Neath flowers thick as those that deck a Servian vale
Which maidens cast off when the Rolo's o'er.

III.

How waving willows fanned me in thy grass,
When sleepily sang I in so calm a lair !
Even as the restless lips of morn breathe air

Upon the idle mountain as they pass,
When softly sings the bird a gentle mass,
 And, slowly rising, like mantles debonnair,
 The warm mists uplift o'er thy bosom fair,
As the waking sigh rippling heaves its glass !
At even I sought the steepest peak above,
 To see the sun sink in the lowest skies,
As the lark droned his last tale of love,
 And weary day slowly drooped her eyes,
And the beetle to boom one last note strove,
 When he falls by thy shore, and breathless lies.

IV.

Pure, singing Lake, thou art still to the years,
 Melody more sweet than heard by thy shore ;
 For when I dream of thee, thy voice once more
Falls upon my soul (soft as angel tears
 Faintly breathing their dew from distant spheres),
 And it rejoices, finding sweet tales of lore
 In every thought upon the days of yore,—
In all it meets or sees, and all it hears.

Even here I stand, by far Potomac's flood,
And feel the wind which dimples o'er thy grace,
And see the smile upon the laughing wood,
And the lark that flits by in jovial race ;
Tho' Winter's frown be on this solitude,
And the skies as wan as a drooping face.

1881.

M A L I C H O.

I.

FROWNING brow that feign'st a mien severe,
Yet as fair shown in that haughtier grace ;
Cunning soul, and thrice more cunning face,
Cloudy with the thoughts which are most clear,
Sunny when the spirit is most drear,—
Why do ye love to cheat?—From man chase
All his youth and joy to sorrow's wry grimace,
And make love that should be sweet so sere ?

II.

Up, up, vain man ! to worship such a thing,
What faith could make thee true ? Thou lovest
not,—

'Tis but an instant doomed to be thy lot,
That thou shalt pine in this low worshipping.
She is fair,—but thou art not her beauty's being :
Thine is the purity, and hers the blot ;
Thou art the god,—and still thou hast forgot
To rule, and thy dropt sceptre hath no sting.

III.

Thou pin'st for one woman, but there are more
Who can give thee peace which she shall ne'er :
Verily, the All-seeing could never bear
To gaze on man, and see his earthly store,
And shape no single soul to bless him, nor
Send one voice to join his earthly prayer,
Interpreter of the mystery of care :
A mite of God's true love in every breast is bore.

IL PUDENTE.**I.**

EVALINA, thou mak'st the soul of man feel
Glad to dream upon such a modesty ;
His breast inhales thy very purity,
For his heart awakens to a joy so real
That heaven itself breathes in thy face ideal.

II.

Whilst I gaze upon thee rapturously,
And press thy hands, white as a snowy sky
Where gentle streaks of veined azure lie,
A meek sigh parts thy lips : I hear it as the key
Of some pure harp in rosy isles beyond the sea :

III.

And the timid hand beats like a gentle sigh,
That stirs a motion in the tides of air:
I feel it, but to my lips I would not dare
To press it; tho' my lips thence might purify,
But such a deed would make my heart too high.

IV.

Modesty! language of a spirit fair
That calls forth man's own soul to love thee more!
Breathing face with the breath of Summer's shore,
When the soft south wind on rosy bair
Is casting the soul of his purity bare!

V.

Most beauteous shape, thou art not earthly, nor
In thy sweet origin, nor in thy mien,—
Those eyes that stare on man as tho' unseen,—
Are they of earth? They know not its ways;
And thereon but seraphims should gaze.

THE LAMENT OF THE SERPENT.

(A Sibilation.)

I.

Down from the land of bliss,
Of pleasure and idlesse,
From the shade where the lotus-tree grows,
From the banks where the Salsabil flows,
Cursed for deeds amiss,
Low my father fell !

II.

Down thro' the trackless waste
Where red flames ever blazed,
Where fire-noxious winds ever hissed,
To o'erflood the skies with darksome mist,
O'er bogs of fire raised,—
Down-stricken to hell !

III.

And I over this maze,
With naught to meet my gaze,
Nor token my misery to alloy,
And warm my breast with slightest joy,
Wander with shaming face,
To mourn heaven lost !

IV.

E'en he who my father's intent won,
Breathes to this day a happier one ;
That Heaven's ire would pass,
And upraise this lowly mass,
That lives a pang of myth groping prone,
To there it loves most !

London, December, 1880.

A N I N C I T E M E N T T O W A R .

I.

THEY fought in the shade
Of a million spears,
They fought and they died,
In the primal years,—
But they were not denied
The liberty they made,—
Death, death was liberty,—
The glory with freedom to die,
In freedom's name, without a sigh.

II.

Where are our glorious men ?
The coward shrinks at the name
Of war ! Are we all,
All cowards, then ?

Our fathers had not this shame,
Our fathers feared no fall ;
Feared slavery—but not the grave ;
Loved life—but not to be a slave ;
And died—but knew not what they gave.

III.

Do we not feel the nip
Of prison chains, slowly
Closing on the tainted limb ?
Away with them ! Away ! Rip
Off the links unholy !
Annul the record grim !
And let our children say,
We lived, and fell—a prey,—
But—tho' vanquished—still did sway.

LINES WRITTEN AT THE CAPITAL,
JANUARY 18, 1882.

I WILL not seek for gold nor pine,—
But find a greater thing to boast;
A wealth of freedom shall be mine,
Which can ne'er be lost.

There is pomp and dress and revelry
All around to tempt me in my way,—
But I'll see men in their vanity,
Without being vain as they.

If there be joys for mortal men,
When Virtue elevates the soul,
I'll seek those joys, and fix my ken
Upon Virtue's goal.

I will not roam the hidden seas,
As my heart did once declare,
Nor seek in forests lone a peace
I sought in vain to share ;

I will not deem that men are base,
And persecute them in despair,—
I'll turn and look them in the face,
And see my own soul there.

My native land is bright and gay :
Spirit, thy freedom is divine !
The joys that Heaven strews in the way
Of seraphs, are thine.

Thy only peace is not the grave,
Nor is death thy truest happiness,—
The meanest thoughts of meanest slave,
Than these are less.

All nature, thro' heaven or heath,
An everlasting beauty gives ;
The lowliest flower that meets its death,
Still in beauty lives.

What wilt thou ? Can Heaven give more,
Or man sublimer things conceive ?
Up, up ! thou art free ! thy store
Was not to make thee grieve !

Search out thy grave in Virtue's name,—
Break these chains that bind thee like a slave !
And lay thy frame without a shame
Into thy grave.

YE SERAPH'S BOON.

I.

I' THAT far land where faeries dwelle,
And Oman rolls ye pearly wave;
Where love her sweetest tale does telle
 And eke the saddest love e'er gave;
Where bulbul sings ye nighte to sleepe
 And zephyr wakes her with a kisse,
All in a palace lone, to weepe
 That fate should give her so much blisse,
 There dwelt a ladye fair.

II.

Ye ladye was a gentle maid,
For royal blood was i' her veins;
But blood, alack-a-day, but made
 Her life full sore with idle pains;

Oh, had she been ye meadowe queen
That roams so blithe ye flowery field,
A sooter joy had she, I ween,
Than weal or pride could ever yield
Unto this ladye fair.

III.

No knighte had she to win her hearte
Whom she could live to love and blesse;
Nor sire had she to keepe her parte,
And tilt her foes of idlenesse;
Nor sistern sweete, nor gentle freres,
Nor e'en a mutual companie,—
Alas! her simple minde, her timid years
Could find no friend in bird or tree
To charm a ladye fair.

IV.

Sweet Idlenesse ! I recke thee sweete
As aught that tempts moralitie;

Old age can love thee leal who's meet
To woo his lost virginitie ;
But for ye blooming, budding flower
That faints and fades for lack employ,
Meseems 'twould fade within an hour
Came there no bird to sip its joy,—
So did ye ladye fair.

v.

She drooped as any rosie brighte
That winter chills, or drought has bent;
Yet neither deathe nor sleepe bedighte
Her snowie cheeke nor eyes ypent ;—
But sleepe, a deepe, unearthlie sleepe,
Did fall upon her gentle soul,
And held it here to wake and weepe
From dreams, I ween, more dole
Than knew a ladye fair.

VI.

Dreams, dreams of many years, could they
Be sweete for hearte that never loved ?
No gentle sprite or errant fay
Came to those dreams with pitie moved,
Nor aught of nature's imagerie
To soothe her soul with faerie scenes,—
But all was darke as deathe could be,
If Heaven a fancy mere had been
Unto this ladye fair.

VII.

Ye insect vile that builds his net
I' every nook and dismal place,
He from ye ladye's hand did set
A silken woof unto her face ;
And on ye palace wide, ye dust

Of ages came and settled deepe ;
And summers came, and winter's gust,
And birdies sang to wake ye sleepe
That wrapt ye ladye fair.

VIII.

So years did hie : until a day
Ye ladye oped her wondrous eyes :
Beside her there a one did stay
That bade her wake and following rise ;
His hoarie bearde heaved as his breaste,
And i' his hand he bore a staffe ;
Like saintly pilgrim was he drest,—
But i' his eyes a cruel laughe
That quaked ye ladye fair.

IX.

“ Oh, ladye fair !” ye wighte he says,
“ Has life but taught thee idlenessse ?

Behold, full many are my days,
And each has taught me happiness :
Now counsel sweete shall be thy grace
If wisdom's worde can make thee heede ;
Those tears bewipe from off thy face,
And take my hand and let me leade
The way, my ladye fair."

x.

" Grammery !" did ye ladye shrieke,
" Unhand me by my royal blood !
But happie rest is all I seeke,
And what than sleepe can be more goode ?
Soote dreams I ken them not, but dream
Full sooter ones than sadder be ;
Now half aloof." With eyes agleam,
Ye cruel wighte but smiled he
Upon ye ladye fair.

XI.

Forth to ye mead he led her out,
And there did stop a fount beside ;
Her piteous moan and mercy shout
With hideous jeers he did deride.
“ Behold ! ” quoth he, “ ye fount is dead,
Whose life has many lives to keepe ;
Ye birdies here that sipped and fed
Shall wake no more from earthlie sleepe
Like thee, my ladye fair.

XII.

“ Now cruel is thy hearte to leave
This fount to warpe so choked with leaves ;
For Nature too can joy or grieve,
More true than mortal joys or grieves :
So stoope thee down ; thy lilie hande

Shall busie be for once, I ween ;
Each faded leaf, each grain of sand,
Although they myriads had been,
Thou'l draw, my ladye fair."

XIII.

Ye ladye looked reluctant pride,
And drewe up her form to quaenlie
Heighte, quaenlie as a quaen could bide
That loves to looke on dignitie ;
But now she turned upon ye wighte
An eye that wailed a pitie looke,—
But met she no reluctance slighte
In sterne demean that did not brooke
To soothe ye ladye fair.

XIV.

And when ye taske ye ladye'd done,
And turned to meet his mild approve,

Behold, ye hermit wighte was gone,
And i' his place a youth did hove ;
His limbs they were yclad i' grace
Whose vesture showed their symmetrie,—
But with his cloakèd arme his face
He hid from sighte, that yearned to see
Ye heart-struck ladye fair.

xv.

Now did ye ladye thinke at last
There was some joy for her to be,
And that ye drearie fate was past
That made her lone and solitarie ;
So rapture i' her eyes so brighte
Did gleam that care seemed strange to her ;—
While gazing with a blushing frighe,
She dared no worde to speake or stir,
He hailed ye ladye fair.

XVI.

“ O ladye, love is sweete, I knowe,
 But changes oft as I have done;—
But now you saw me bending low
 And looking all that love would shun ;
Whilst, lo, I now am fair and young,
 Yet hide my face as hides a sting;
So who can tell that righte or wrong
 ‘Twould be to love or hate a thing
 Like me, my ladye fair?

XVII.

“ Awhile agone you feared my mien,
 Whiles now you love,—and yet the same
Am I in mind and soul, I ween,
 Howe'er my garb inspire or shame:
Now see, ye moral is so sweete,

I wonder deepe you finde it not,—
Whilst here you pine and idly greet,
Yet happy still could be thy lot,
My lonelie ladye fair.

XVIII.

“ With Charitie a pleasure lives
That falls as bounteous on the head,
And earth benevolently gives
Full many a joy in pleasure's stead;
For naught can be so sweete as life
That lives another life to keepe,
And idlesse is a busie strife
For one who's hearte is lighte yet deepe,
My lonelie ladye fair.

XIX.

“ Ere many hieing years are gone
This triste shall join us once again.

And, oh, if else can break thy mien so lone
 And make thee happy free of paine,
I onlie would my lovelie lot 'twould be
 To give the boon that made thee soe;
A mien so faire Love ne'er did see
 That drooped so sad as thee, and lowe,
 My prettie ladye fair."

xx.

Thus having said, ye youth he turned
 And hasted to ye ancient woode,
While, gazing there, ye ladye spurned
 He to heede that weeping bade him bode;
But reaching now ye forest shade,
 He did uncloak his hidden face,—
That mien—those eyes—that they portrayed
 One of Heaven's cherubic race
 Did know ye ladye fair.

March, 1878.

THE POET.

I saw a Poet with a shaggy mane
And features leonine;
I strove to deem him great, and fain
Would love a thing divine;

But, lo, he won no mortal soul,
And loafed within his own;
His sullen mien, his eyeball's roll,
Were of the sad and lone.

O Heaven! is this the world's great Peer,—
This a Master, when a Slave?—
The Poet, the Prophet, and the Seer
Should see farther than the Grave!

Be freer, nobler, mightier in aim,
And born by God's reflection ;—
Aspiring, loving, not in name and fame,
But scourge of Life's dejection.

October 2, 1882.

EPIGRAMS.

I SAW a fool and a fool saw me ;
In mind and soul no difference knew he.

When a Poet has fame, he's a great man ;
When he has not, he lives but to hate man.

Argue never with a dunce,—
He'd conquer thee at once.

I love your dishes and fain would be at your feast,—
But you'll pardon my absence of stomach at least.

Men love women, women love men,
The former silly, the latter vain ;—
One loves one, whilst the other loves ten,—
One is duped, and the other lacks gain.

If vice could gain us Paradise,
Hell would ne'er have given us vice.

M E D I T A T I O N.

O SIREN fair, I see thee standing there,
Thy raven locks embowering two white arms ;
Thy naiad features warm, thy bosom bare,
Breathing forth a breath more sweet than summer
air,
Thine eyes pent down with a musing stare,
Thy limbs inclined, so soft, so crimson fair,—
Oh, lend me power to see seraphic charms
As thine without a mute and blind despair.

Above thee lies the meadow of the skies,
Where romping clouds do chase the hieing noon,
While Phœbus, with sad maternal eyes,
Beckons them home ; high round-about thee rise
Many a beechen pale ; the river hies
Full gently at thy feet ; thy shadow lies
Upon its panting breast ; the stealthy moon
Ascends, birds sing, and list'ning night replies.

I dare not gaze ; how strive to make thee raise
The veil that shades thee in a thought so deep,
But lends thy beauty light ? Some distant maze,
Some sphere where worlds and stars unknown do
blaze,
Where love is pure, and man far longer stays,
Has run its course before thy dreaming gaze—
Has rocked thy soul into a cherub's sleep,
And sang to thee Heaven's own roundelay.

A sudden light comes o'er the vision bright;
She wakes; she moves; the bending brow is raised
The stooping form betakes its wonted height
And wends the shallow tide: enraptured, night
Hushes to view the glory of the sight;
And, gazing o'er the flood with sad delight,
As had nor mortal eyes nor angel's gazed,
Gleam Luna and her guardian satellite.

1884.

A SONG.

LOVE, love, love,
Thou art more false than hate,
For it will live where thou hast met thy fate.

Love, love, love,
Thou art more low than scorn,
For it will mock the day that thou wert born.

Love, love, love,
'Vaunt from this heart of mine !
For it hates and it scorns both thee and thine.

T H E S W E E T E S T S O N G.

I.

THE sweetest song I ever heard,
With mortal's best delight,
Came not from any happy bird
That gave her soul to night ;
But from a maiden's virgin heart
That never loved before,
To tell me in her simple art
The mutual love she bore.

II.

The saddest song I ever heard,
Was when that maiden's breath
Breathed out the fond last parting word*
Of souls still bound in death ;
She told me still her love was mine,
If mortal pride would take it,
And that her love would be divine,
As she could ne'er forsake it.

III.

Those songs, or sad or sweet, are heard
When youth is in its prime,
And still they sing, like any bird,
Within the heart thro' time ;

* "Fond last farewell."—*Byron.*

And sweet and sad the moral lies
In songs so sung as those,—
That teach us grief is of our joys,
And love is of our woes.

London, 1883.

'TIS LOVE THIS YEAR.

'Tis Love this year shall be my guide,
And show me whom to marry;
Thro' all the world I'll wander wide
And only finding tarry;
I'll find her here or there,
In Venice or Meru,
I'll take her, if she's fair,
From China or Peru.

As fair a maiden she shall be
As ever mortal sainted;

She'll give me all her purity,
Yet bear my sins untainted;
Tho' where to find a one so fair
Is far beyond my guessing,
Yet still I'll find her here or there,—
And take her with a blessing.

A beauty shall her mind adorn,
So strong in holy meekness,
That ne'er within that mind a scorn
Arose for mortal weakness;
She'll raise me up and make me dare
To feel I'm worth that beauty,—
But,—ah! I'll find her here or there,
For 'tis my life and duty.

Her every thought shall be a grace
But equalled by her splendor,
And each soft feature of her face
Shall show a thought as tender;

And tho' to win a one so fair
'Twould take a mortal clever,
Yet still I'll find her here or there,—
And keep her too forever.

'Tis Love this year shall be my guide,
And show me whom to marry;
Thro' all the world I'll wander wide
And only finding tarry;
I'll find her here or there,
In Venice or Meru,
I'll take her, if she's fair,
From China or Peru.

O H, S I R E N F A I R.

OH, SIREN fair, I'd bravely dare
To give thy face a look,
But to declare the love I bear
My heart could never brook.

Each sweet device whose soft advice
So tells me how to win thee,
But seems a vice to bind the ice
That chills the heart within thee.

Since Love's replies in those cold eyes
No mutual feeling render,
Then were it wise to change my guise
And show I'm not so tender?

Alas, the mind that yearns to find
A single trait that charms thee,
But falls behind the love less blind
Whose careless pride disarms thee.

So if I tried, as I denied,
To treat you like the rest,
You'll lose your pride and yearn to hide
Your blushes in my breast.

But take your choice, and heed the voice
Whose love is only Fashion,—
And when that dies you'll find the guise
That Love should wear is Passion.

'TIS LOVE, MY BOYS.

'Tis love, my boys, 'tis love, my boys,
'Tis only love you're needing ;
'Twill wipe the tears from out your eyes,
And stop your heart that's bleeding ;
So haste you now and find a lassie,
And take her home and love her,
And tho' she's virtuous, sweet, yet sassy,
She'll raise you far above her.

I've tried it, boys, I've tried it, boys,
And know the thing is worthy ;
She made me happy, made me wise
Beyond a portion earthy ;
She gave me truth, and I was base,
She gave me love and feeling,
And e'en the features of her face
I felt to mine came stealing.

She makes me, boys, she makes me, boys,
She makes me all so jolly,
That every thought within me dies
That leads to mournful folly ;
I press her lips, and they are pure,
Yet feel that mine grow purer,
And tho' her love is more than sure,
Yet mine, I feel, is surer.

I love her, boys, I love her, boys,
As only love could make me ;
She binds my heart with gentle ties
Whose strength shall ne'er forsake me ;
I am not weak, for she is here
To fortify my weakness,
And all my sorrow, hope, and fear
She bears for me with meekness.

I thought her, boys, I thought her, boys,
I thought her far above me,

And could but think some sweet surmise
Of pity made her love me ;
But when I twined my arms around
Her heaving bosom tender,
I knew the ties by which we're bound
Are all that Love can render.*

'Tis love, my boys, 'tis love, my boys,
'Tis only love you're needing ;
'Twill wipe the tears from out your eyes,
And stop your heart that's bleeding ;
So haste you now and find a lassie,
And take her home and love her,
And tho' she's virtuous, sweet, yet sassy,
She'll raise you far above her.

* This last quatrain is not original, so far as ideas are concerned.

COLUMBIA'S KINGS.

COLUMBIA's kings shall rule fore'er
And wear the crown of liberty;
Her noble sons have higher blood
Than hearts whose freedom is not free;
The stars of Fortune, at her will,
Were drawn like satraps from above,
And kneeling down beneath her frown
Cringed out the fate of Peace and Love.

O blessed Peace! O happy Love,—
Full many lands can claim ye less!
O glorious doom that here below
The curse of war should curse to bless!
Tho' deep in foul oppression erst,
We still were free to break our chains,—
For tho' but slaves, we feared our graves
Would bind our souls with coward stains.

We claimed our portion just, and won,
But mercy came with valiant pride,
And for our foes—we hid their crimes,
That only Peace and Love could hide :
So, once fair Freedom's hand is won,
May Peace and Love oppressive bind,
Till Love is near and Peace is dear
To every realm and heart and mind.

THE WAR-CRY OF THE NORTH.

WE were not born
To fear, but scorn,
The conqueror's stake for Freedom's sake ;
Let every arm, tho' myriads swarm,
Be joined like one in fight !

Tho' with our graves
We'll free the slaves,

Whose fate unjust, by Southern lust,
'Gainst Nature's weal and hearts that feel,
Is bound in Freedom's sight!

They breathe the air,
The passions share,
Of hearts as free as liberty;
Their woes they feel,—to God they kneel,
And pray for peace and light.

Then on and speed!
Ignoble deed
Of him that stands when Heaven commands,
Each hand that strives to save these lives
Should strive with Heaven's own might.

Then on, ye braves!
And seek your graves.
With souls elate for others' fate;
And fall on man a coward's ban
Whose hand deserts the right!

THE DEFEAT OF THE SOUTH.

Above our mighty eagle soared
And scanned the bloody field,
It saw a people's rights restored,
And saw their tyrants yield,
Yet drooped its wings beside the dead
And shunned a prey so gory,—
Tho' every drop of blood we shed
Was worth a name of glory.

It saw the long-bound slave leap free
Across the Southern hills,
And thank with tears on bended knee
The savior of his ills;
It saw the hearts that ever felt
Their woes with patience mute,

Kneel down as mortal never knelt,
Who once was but a brute.

It saw the maiden, meek and fair,
Whose beauty was her shame,
That begged her lord at least would spare
Her humble virgin name ;
It saw the helpless babe whose birth
Was still its parent's doom,
Torn from her arms—because its mirth
Had soothed its mother's gloom.

But more, ah, more than this, its eye
Beheld with shrinking flame ;
It saw a nation's doom was nigh
To blast her virgin fame ;
When Conscience true at last revealed
She could not be so base,
And tore the shield that had concealed
The pity in her face.

And when our mighty eagle soared
And scanned the bloody field,
It saw a people's rights restored,
And saw their tyrants yield,
Yet drooped its wings beside the dead,
And shunned a prey so gory,—
Tho' every drop of blood we shed
Was worth a name of glory.

THE SLAVE'S RHAPSODY.

I.

AFAR, afar on Afric's sunny shore,
I roamed the tropic forest wild,
Nor dreamed a dream that made my being more
Than Nature's rude but happy child.

II.

Until the tyrant's coward lust had bade
Him bear us captive o'er the brine,
And recked not that a lineal sire had made
Us brothers of an equal line.

III.

In lands remote they taught us we were slaves
Whom Nature's crimes had bound in chains,
And less by far had been our recreant graves
Than such a doom of penal pains.

IV.

Around us spread a scene so wondrous fair
That in our dreams 'twas never found,—
But then, ah then, the heart was beating there
That said 'twas just we should be bound.

V.

They thought our woes were joys to those whose
hearts
Were born so weak and reprobate,
And when we sought relax in simple arts
They feared we'd learn to curse our fate.

VI.

They seized the babe whose mother's breast had
thrilled
To feel a shade of liberty,
And with the craven scourge her sorrow stilled,
Unless that sorrow chose to die.

VII.

Each trivial right of life we were denied
That even brutes had justly claimed,
And all the more our cruel bonds they tied,
They thought our savage hearts were tamed.

VIII.

Alas ! not only birth had laid us low,
But nature's starved and feeble frame ;
And when the world had heard our wail of woe,
Kind Death could not return his claim.

IX.

And yet, and yet, could every soul revive,
Or speak beyond its ruthless grave,
'Twould thank the guardian star that saw it live
And die to free its brother slave.

X.

For still the tyrant's heart could feel that slept,
But needed conscience true to raise him ;
And all the woes we felt or tears we wept
We'd bear again if they could praise him.

BEHOLD THE DAY.

Tune—“HANG JEFF DAVIS.”

BEHOLD the day that saw us free
Is still without a night,
And still the morning star shall be
Our cynosure and light;
For where, oh, where's the tyrant hand that
dares defy,
For where, oh, where's the tyrant hand that
dares defy,
For where, oh, where's the tyrant hand that
dares defy,
Defy our native land.

II.

They never fell whom Nature formed
To face an enemy,—

Whose patriot veins by birth are warmed
With blood that must be free;
But where, oh, where's, etc.

III.

The conqueror's lust for weal and war
Shall be by us disdained,—
For bounteous Peace shall bring us more
Than ever conqueror gained;
And where, oh, where's, etc.

IV.

The angry seas may be our foes
And storms may hurtle o'er,—
But never deeper be our woes,
And peace for evermore;
Until, until, etc.

'TIS PEACE.

Tune—“YANKEE DOODLE”

'Tis Peace, sweet Peace that binds
Our happy hearts together,
And lends our free-born minds
A sun in darkest weather;
For Peace, our Life and Art,
'Tis only Peace we cherish,
And all that dims the heart
In this fair land would perish.

O Peace, sweet Peace, we found
And made thee Freedom's own,
While still our heart was bound
Beneath a foreign throne,—

But, oh, what bonds could claim
A heart so true and free,
When even Freedom came
And gave her hand to thee !

Still Peace, sweet Peace shall stay
Until that Freedom dies,
And still her influence sway
Our fondest mutual ties ;
For Peace, our Life and Art,
'Tis only Peace we cherish,
And all that dims the heart
In this fair land would perish.

"HIGH HEAVEN MAY."

(A Patriotic Song.)

HIGH Heaven may guard our native land
And see it more than others blest;
His many gifts His generous hand
May plant amain from east to west;—
But there are gifts He never dowers,
And left to our creative might,—
The glorious unity of powers,
The self-made gifts of peace and right.

II.

We have not won our laurels here
Like victors base of despot fame,
But fear a war as cowards fear
Till blood is shed in Freedom's name:

High, high our mighty eagle soars
And wings the world from main to main,
Nor strives to light on other shores,
Nor grants them more than just disdain.

III.

The blood of many nations burns
And purifies within our veins ;
One heart ebbs out their joys and yearns
To feel and beat to soothe their pains :
A million souls, and each is free,
Have all the rights of kings and lords,—
Yet see their throne of liberty
Without surmise of tyrant hordes.

IV.

A million souls, tho' they be bound,
Can find fair Freedom here at last ;
To e'en its foes our native ground
Will yield a respite for the Past :

Each procreant space of passing time
A harvest yields of many years,—
For prosp'rous Fortune loves our clime,
And even smiles athwart her tears.

V.

But Fortune's bays can give us pride
To share their joys with poverty ;
Our lords of wealth no heart deride
That warms with kindred liberty :
The scales of Justice, justified,
Weigh mercy with the foulest deed,
And more than base the man that died
Whom Pity's tears had never freed.

VI.

A thousand years shall fall on earth
To tint, but not to blast, our bloom ;
Each year shall see a nation's birth
And each a nation in the tomb ;

Fair Art shall paint a new design
And Wisdom's words be turned to gold,
While Freedom, Peace, and Love combine
To hide the griefs we grieved of old.

VII.

High Heaven may guard our native land
And see it more than others blest;
His many gifts His generous hand
May plant amain from east to west;—
But there are gifts He never dowers,
And left to our creative might,—
The glorious unity of powers,
The self-made gifts of peace and right.

STANZAS FOR MUSIC.

Tho' the future's bosom oft be clad in robes of light,
When the soul is glad and gilds its path before the
sight,

'Tis more within those folds we mourn past joys
denied,

Nor reap a single bliss from that which once hath
died.

The guardian sail that waft us to our joy before,
Strewn o'er the ocean past, in shreds to join no
more,

The eye in transport views and melts a fitful tear
To join the wrecking tides that scorned to make a
bier.

'Tis mine the lone heart ne'er known with joy t'
abide,
So fond of grief, and wanly sad with hope beside,
That bears its woful store ascribe, too proud to
weep,
But strives to seek in woe, and mingles woe with
sleep.

If from this heart one thing might claim a silent
fear,
Tho' no future dawns on me with brilliance clear,
'Tis that the path wherein my feet so long have sun-
less strayed,
Should rise to light and bloom and song that e'er
should fade.

But the blood that thro' the veins ne'er with warmth
did creep,
Nor throbbed in the heart one sweet beat to reap,

As the wanderer wild on Lapland's icy shore,
Knows but that single clime and knowledge asks no
more.

Philadelphia, May 10, 1881.

SONG.

HAST thou thy sweet heart to deny?
Hast thou thy roseate lips for scorn?
Hast thou the soft light of thine eye
To shun love with sincerity mourn?

Oh, there is a love that is cold!
There is a love that hath no light!
No truth that is steadfast and bold,
And fades as the day into night.

Oh, there is a love that is warm,—
As true as the bright cynosure
That leads the mariner thro' storm,
Everlasting, faithful, and sure.

Exists not that love in my breast?
Exists not that love with its fire?
Oh, as the zephyrs of the West
Let me kiss the dew of thy cheek and expire!

March, 1881.

TO JULIET.

(Who died in her eighteenth year.)

I.

FOR thee my ever-mournful sigh,
The flow of a fervent tear,
While for I bear on the memory
That gone days have rendered dear;

Sleep shall not fondle my breast
Nor weave sweet dreams in slumber ;
It sobs for thee and that rest
When no dreams may encumber.

II.

I stand on the bowery spot
Where thy love's first words were mine,
And the myrtle-tree wafts not
The loved breath that was thine ;
'Twas here, 'twas here that those words
Thrilled o'er the chords of my heart,—
Sweet song, I hear it like birds
Singing with magical art.

III.

I stray not to thy tomb to weep
Where those flowers waft spray-dew ;
For I know such tears o'er thy sleep
Would snatch from those violets their hue ;

But in the glow of the moonlight
I wander to the silent glade,
And long, oh, long with thy sprite
Love's sweet communion is made.

IV.

Life ne'er shall have a joy for me,
Or be so dear as it might have been ;
No love but that I bear for thee
Could love another of thy mien ;
Sleep shall not fondle my breast
Nor weave sweet dreams in slumber ;
It sobs for thee and that rest
Where no dreams may encumber.

A SONG.

A LARK skipped up and sang to me
As a morn the woods I strolled,—
Like a Naiad from the sea
Leapt he from the dewy wold,—
And sang as sweetly as the breeze
That fans the rosy Cyclades.

It seemed a song so new to me,
Made my soul so glad with joy,
I sat me down upon the lea
Till the sun had left the sky,—
I sat me down and listened till
The night came down upon the hill.

Full many songs I'd heard of yore
That fell upon the ears like kisses,

But never have I felt before
Such a happy shower as this is,—
And so I blessed the little bird
For singing songs so seldom heard.

I know not how the thoughts could rise
If there were sweeter melody,
For tears had drowned my heart and eyes
To see how great a bird could be,—
Oh, if I only sang as well
Perhaps the secret how I'd tell.

Long Branch, May, 1885.

SCOTCH SONGS.

(The following songs in the Scottish style were written during a sojourn in Ayr and vicinity, or in the Land of Burns.)

OH, MEET ME THERE.

("Standing there, upon the banks of 'bonny Ayr,' the two youthful lovers vowed to be true to one another, exchanging Bibles and other love-tokens, promising to meet again on the same spot. Alas! they met no more."—*Life of Burns.*)

OH, meet me there, oh, meet me there,
Upon the bonny banks of Ayr,—
Forget it not, forget it ne'er,
The vow we made by bonny Ayr.

I told her there with tender care,
Upon the bonny banks of Ayr,
That mortal love could love nae mair (no more)
Than I loved her by bonny Ayr.

My heart grew sair with mute despair (sore)
Upon the bonny banks of Ayr,
Her heart so true, how could she dare
To break my heart by bonny Ayr?

The muirland bare I watched it e'er
Upon the bonny banks of Ayr,
But that sweet face it lit nae mair
The muirland by the bonny Ayr.

A face sae dear, than truth more fair,
Or roses on the banks of Ayr,—
My heart went out and flowed to her
As flow the tides of bonny Ayr.

We roamed the mere and plucked them there,
Those gowans on the banks of Ayr,— (daisies)
Oh, joyfu' days! to pluck once mair
Those gowans on the banks of Ayr.

It came like flowers and blossomed there
Upon the bonny banks of Ayr,

And Spring may come to raise once mair
The love that bloomed by bonny Ayr.

Oh, meet me there, oh, meet me there,
Upon the bonny banks of Ayr,—
Forget it not, forget it ne'er,
The vow we made by bonny Ayr.

THE BONNY DOON.

(The variations of sound in the following are purposed, the song being adapted to a tune which I heard, but the words to which I forgot.)

SWEET, sweet the song the hills among
When mavis sings beneath the moon,
But sweeter bird than song I heard
Ne'er sweeter sang by bonny Doon.

I thought, alas! the bonny lass
Had naething in her heart to greet, (weep)
A step sae fleet, a face sae sweet (so)
Ne'er lover won or ran tae meet,— (to)

But each soft tone seemed like a moan
That's sung to sorrow's saddest tune,—
Tho' sweeter song ne'er thrilled among
The braes beside the bonny Doon.

Full sad and clear the mournful tear
Dropt from the lassie's bonny e'e, (eye)
And roses shed by that dew fed
A sadder fragrance o'er the lea;
While on my breast a sweet unrest
Fell like the leaves that fall at noon,
For, fond, fond maid, those tears were shed
For me beside the bonny Doon.

Wi' cautious step I gently crep'
And proved the vow I made was true;
Her tearful eye I kissed it dry
And stole the rose's precious dew;
Her sweet alarms, fast in my arms,
She lost in conscious rapture soon,—

Then sang again that mournful strain
I heard her sing by bonny Doon.

Sweet, sweet the song the hills among
When mavis sings beneath the moon,
But sweeter bird than song I heard
Ne'er sweeter sang by bonny Doon.*

My laddie jo he's gone away,
He's gone away beyond the sea,—
Perhaps he'll meet some ither lassie there, (other)
And break the vow he made with me.

Oh, laddie jo, oh, laddie jo,
How could you be so fause? (false)
I love thee mair than lassie e'er
Has loved a lad so fause.

* Some of the expressions in this poem, as "stole the rose's dew," and her "alarms, fast in my arms," are not original.

My laddie jo forgets the day
We roamed theg'ither o'er the mere,— (together,)
Perhaps he'll breathe a vow more true
Into that other lassie's ear.

My laddie jo, still, still the spray
I'll wear of blue forget-me-ne'er;
Ilk leaf has ta'en a joy from me (each)
And ilk shall bring a future care.

And, laddie jo, I'll love thee aye
Wi' all the love o' mony year,
And be it fause, or be it fair,
Ne'er, ne'er for me you'll drap a tear.*

Oh, laddie jo, oh, laddie jo,
How could you be so fause?
I love thee mair than lassie e'er
Has loved a lad so fause.

* "Never for me you'll shed a tear."—*Byron*.

A F T O N - W A T E R S .

WHERE Afton-waters gently glide
A distant stranger came to roam ;
He'd seen full many a fairer tide
Where Niagara leaps in torrent foam ;
But could Heaven the fate reclaim
That saw him born beyond the sea,
Sweet Afton-tide, no patriot shame
Should stop his heart from loving thee.

Where Afton-waters gently glide
Fair nature re'els her fairest scene ; (shows)
No turbid rills or mountains wide
Disturb or span her mild demesne ;
But simple flowers, of simplest hue,
That scorn the rose's haughty blaze,

Sweet Afton-tide, thy banks bestrew,
And charmèd the wanderer's gaze.*

Where Afton-waters gently glide
Sweet Spring awakes her earliest morn ;
Still Winter fumes on Thames's side
While she laughs on the northern bourne ;
For blooming trees show forth their buds,
That mock cold March's sultry air,
Sweet Afton-tide, beside thy floods
While southern fields are stript and bare.

Where Afton-waters gently glide
The mavis sings the sweetest heard ;
Nae doubt the burn and daisies pied
Have sway upon the bonny bird ;
And lingering there, the moon beneath,
Whose rapture showed in every ray,

* " Charmed the wandering eye."—*Wordsworth*.

Sweet Afton-tide, my patriot's faith
Fell down and knelt beneath thy sway.

Where Afton-waters gently glide
A distant stranger came to roam ;
He'd seen full many a fairer tide
Where Niagara leaps in torrent foam ;
But could Heaven the fate reclaim
That saw him born beyond the sea,
Sweet Afton-tide, no patriot shame
Should stop his heart from loving thee.

T H E S W E E T E S T B I R D T H A T S I N G S
B Y D E E .

(Imitated from the Scottish.)

THE sweetest bird that sings by Dee
Ne'er sweeter sang a song for me,

When roaming there upon the brae
Thy trembling frame
And blushing shame,
Said Aye, my love, said Aye.

I knew full well thy gentle heart
Would pity mair than shun the part,
The humble part, I offered thee,—
So boldly strove
To win thy love,
In wham na hate cad be. (In whom no hate
could be.)

And winning thee I won the gowd (gold)
That came upon me like a cloud
And dimmed the horizon of love,—
'Twad be na wae ('Twould—woe)
To hurl't away
Gin thou cad happier be. (If.)

Then hurl't away, my love, away,
And we will pass our cantie day (happy)
Aboon the hills in poortith kin'—(Beyond
the hills in poverty kind)
Oh hurl't away,
My love, and ta'e (take)
My lot as I wad thine.

SHOULD A MAIDEN TEMPT.

SHOULD a maiden tempt my eyes,
Bind my heart with Beauty's ties,
Draw my soul unto my tongue, and start
My cold and once unravished lips to part
With Love's own deepest eloquence,
Methinks I still should have the sense
To cease th' orator and let her slip,
If up to Love she turned a lip;—

Methinks her beauty would all die,
And fit her for a human sigh ;
Her life be dead, her soul be gone,
And all her wit beneath a stone.

But if she sought to prove her wisdom
And blessed me as the king of kissdom,
And drew me forward with a terse
And queenly sense as sweet as verse,
And soured my thoughts for admiration,
And made my heaven belike damnation,
And e'en did make herself seraphic,—
A really sort of mournful sapphic,—
Meseems my tongue and lips would teach,
In brazen words descriptive speech,
The soul its transport's real fetch,
And how I won what's hard to catch.

Now my voice like hurtling thunder,
Then like streams the beechens under,

Then again a little sallying
And from flattery a-rallying ;
Now, a somewhat cold and distant,
Making love's desire consistent ;
Then, awhile most backward and most coy,
To prove herself to me a toy,
And me to her yet sensible in joy.
First I'd shake her breast with fear,
Then call out a stranger tear,
And hence draw her soul about
With a sweet Philippic rout ;
Until she dreamed of Cyclades
And bodied up Demosthenes,
With he who told a tale of Love
Until the seraphs wept above,—
With she that heard and knelt before him,
And withal bethought it better to adore him.

Baltimore, January 16, 1883.

A MILLINER'S ADVERTISEMENT.

I.

Not tinsel, fucus, and brocade,
Merino fine and silken braid,
Alone our pride and boast:
In these excel, no doubt, our shelves;
But th' excellence is in ourselves,
To welcome friend and host.

II.

Frowns and becks and counter-minces,
Tongues a-tune with angry winces,
And slow inalertness,—
We know them not; but power to please,
And meek, unshop-like, knowing ease,
Quick with light expertness.

III.

Come for aught or come for naught,
We'll please as we can, and warrant the bought
 Will not avert ye:
Or if betimes you're passing nigh us,
And feel the mood that tempts to try us,
 Oh, let's divert ye!

TO A FRIEND.

“Bonos corrumpunt moves congressus malis.”—*Tertullian.*

I.

GLORIOUS seems thy state, when Stygian,
Pent in the darkness of a fit religion
 For Hades nation:

For false and unearthly is the piety
That lifts itself beyond society
And human station.

II.

O find the moral of our lives not in their gloom,
Nor see the spirit of our faith within the tomb,
And hapless seek
To raise and bind the heart to vain perfection :
For high is that soul in man's election
That loves its weak.

III.

Who finds his glory before he knows the grave ?
Who lives not free on earth should be a slave
With chains divine :
But traits of character and moral features
May have their bounds with us : alas, poor creatures !
Our heads feel wine !

IV.

We reel about and banquet on our hopes,
And strew the revel-board, as drunkard copes
 While drunkard claims ;
Or, each for each, and all a-groping,
We feel our little strength in concord moping
 Toward our aims.

V.

And yet—all our frailties, say, what are they ?
Our hopes they feed, our joys not mar they,
 And error fades
Before the eyes of God that see them all.
Our hopes and joys are Nature : she has her pall,
 And we our shades.

VI.

But, bent on Mercy for our peccant lives,
She gives her boon and moral—then shrives
 Us all before Thee !

So moving with the current of our life,
We pursue the Lethe of our sin and strife,
And there adore Thee !

Washington, November 2, 1882.

MAIDEN, I WILL LOVE THEE.

I.

MAIDEN, I will love thee,
Maiden with no lip of scorn ;
Not in Heaven above thee
Is aught more heavenly born :—

II.

Not the seraphs above thee,
Not the demons below thee,
To an evil could move thee,
Nor a glory bestow thee.

III.

So I will love, and I will love
As long as heav'nly loves endure ;
Until my love seems flown above
And worshipping an angel pure.

August, 1882.

KATHLEEN.

'TWAS roaming o'er the hills a day,
When the noon was waning pale,
I met a maiden on my way,
Kathleen, the flower of the vale.

"What makes your eyes so wan," she said,
"Once I've seen them sparkling glow ?
And bowed toward the earth your head,
That deemed the world its pride below !

“ ‘Tis for some lover from thee gone?
For one dead within her grave?
For one that scorns to look upon
Your heart her love from grief would save?

“ What makes your eyes so wan,” she said,
“ Once I’ve seen them sparkling glow?”
“ ‘Tis not for one I love who’s dead,
Nor for one away my woe.”

“ Why bowed toward the earth your head,
That deemed the world its pride below?”
“ ‘Tis not to shame* the sun o’erhead,
But the face before me now!

“ ‘Tis you that scorn to look upon
My heart your love from grief would save—”
“ Then smile upon your beacon sun,
‘Tis I the one your love doth crave!”

* To shame, to shun.

I pressed the maiden to my breast,
I soothed her with a fond caress,—
She loved me ere her love I guessed,
I loved her more than love could guess.

Philadelphia, May, 1881.

OH, LET ME SEE THY FACE DIVINE.

OH, let me see thy face divine,
I cannot ask for more;
Or let me take thy hand in mine,
And guide thee on this shore.

And I will lead thee to the fair,
Through hills that fairest raise,
And I will lead thee to the air
Where suns make warmest days.

And when I've led thee there and gaze
Upon thy face divine,
As we wend the murmuring maze,
Still thy hand in mine,

Oh, may I ask to kiss the blush,
Like a zephyr gently bore,
When love awakes and words are flush?*
And drop thy hand no more?

October 30, 1881.

* In two or three years this will not appear "slang;" the word *flush* is already used with propriety.

LINES.

LET minds differ, but all spirits are the same ;
The marigold hath its varying dyes,
But still 'tis aye one flower in man's eyes,
One flower, with one God, and a single name.

Tho' religion have consistence in its texts,
'Tis still for the worship of one Being ;
And every man's proper mode of seeing
Is from one point, whate'er be his pretexts.—

One point, the earth ; one point, the human soul,
Which rates and feeds upon what earth gives ;
Which moves with the moving days, and lives
To reap means for the passing of Death's toll.

Washington, D. C., February 20, 1882.

COULD I BUT FIND A LASS TO
LOVE.

COULD I but find a lass to love
Whose heart is soft and tender,
I'd love her so that ne'er a word
Or deed of mine would dare offend her;
But living here, among a crowd
Whose love is made of fashion,
I see not one that e'en when won
Were worth a poet's passion.

I've sought my fond and fair ideal
In many a land beyond the sea,
And still methinks she can be found
As long as love that's true can be;

Yet, finding not, where'er I seek,
'Tis strange my heart thus craves her still,—
Perchance such love the gods above
Have given me here to break my heart.

But be my heart or bro'en or tent,
I'll more than love the lass I marry;
And ne'er I'll wed me here below,
Although a thousand years I tarry,
Ere that fair maid, my fond ideal,
Whose heart is soft and tender,
God's pity shows to heal my woes
And love me in my sorrow.

THE END.



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